Part 1. Introduction

The State of Utah is vulnerable to natural, technological, and man-made hazards that have the possibility of causing serious threat to the health, welfare, and security of our citizens. The cost of response to and recovery from potential disasters can be substantially reduced when attention is turned to mitigating their impacts and effects before they occur or re-occur.

Hazard mitigation is defined as any cost-effective action that has the effect of reducing, limiting, or preventing vulnerability of people, property, and/or the environment to potentially damaging, harmful, or costly hazards. Hazard mitigation actions, which can be used to eliminate or minimize the risk to life and property, fall into three categories: first, those that keeps the hazard away from people, property, and structures: second, those that keeps people, property, and structures away from the hazard: and third, those that do not address the hazard at all but rather reduce the impact of the hazard on the victims such as insurance. This mitigation plan has strategies that fall into all three categories.

Hazard mitigation actions must be practical, cost effective, environmentally, and politically acceptable. Actions taken to limit the vulnerability of society to hazards must not in themselves be more costly than the value of anticipated damages.

Capital investment decisions must be considered in conjunction with natural hazard vulnerability. Capital investments can include; homes, roads, public utilities, pipelines, power plants, chemical plants, warehouses, and public works. These decisions can influence the degree of hazard vulnerability of a community. Once a capital facility is in place very few opportunities will present themselves over the useful life of the facility to correct any errors in location or construction with respect to hazard vulnerability. It is for these reasons that zoning ordinances, which restrict development in high vulnerability areas, and building codes, which ensure that new buildings are built to withstand the damaging forces of hazards, are the most useful mitigation approaches a city can implement.

In the past, mitigation has been the most neglected aspect within emergency management. Since the priority to implement mitigation activities is generally low in comparison to the perceived threat, some important mitigation measures are neglected in favor of high-profile events. Mitigation success can be achieved, however, if accurate information is portrayed through complete hazard identification and impact studies, followed by effective mitigation management. Hazard mitigation is the key to greatly reducing long-term risk to people and property living in Utah from natural hazards and their effects. Preparedness for all hazards includes response and recovery plans, training, development, management of resources, and the need to mitigate each jurisdictional hazard.

A. Purpose

The purposes of this plan are as follows: to fulfill federal, state, and local hazard mitigation planning obligations; to engage in long-term mitigation planning, and to direct mitigation actions which would serve to minimize conditions which would have an undesirable impact on our citizens, the economy, environment, and the well-being of the state of Utah. This plan enhances the awareness of city and county officials, agencies, and the public to the threat that hazards have on property and life and what can be done to help prevent or reduce the vulnerability of each Utah jurisdiction.

B. Scope

The SEUALG PDM plan was developed in accordance with the requirements of the FEMA Section 322 regulations, DESHS, local planning agencies, the Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments, and the Wasatch Front Regional Council.

The goal of this plan is to assist the area consisting of the Carbon, Emery, Grand, and San Juan counties in reducing their costs of natural disasters through mitigation practices. This plan provides comprehensive hazard identification, risk assessment, vulnerability analysis, mitigation actions, and an implementation schedule for the region.

Regulations set forth by FEMA in were followed during development of this plan. Future monitoring, evaluating, updating and implementation will take place as new incidents occur or every five years.

C. Authority

Federal: Public Law 93-288 as amended, established the basis for federal hazard mitigation activity in 1974. A section of this Act requires the identification, evaluation, and mitigation of hazards as a prerequisite for state receipt of future disaster assistance outlays. Since 1974, many additional programs, regulations, and laws have expanded on the original legislation to establish hazard mitigation as a priority at all levels of government. When PL 93-288 was amended by the Stafford Act, several additional provisions were also added that provide for the availability of significant mitigation measures in the aftermath of Presidential declared disasters. Civil Preparedness Guide 1-3, Chapter 6- Hazard Mitigation Assistance Programs places emphasis on hazard mitigation planning directed toward hazards with a high impact and threat potential.

President Clinton signed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) into Law on October 30, 2000. Section 322, defines mitigation planning requirements for state, local, and tribal governments. Under Section 322 States are eligible for an increase in the Federal share of hazard mitigation, if they submit a mitigation plan (which is a summary of local and/or regional mitigation plans) that identifies natural hazards, risks, vulnerabilities, and which describes proposed actions to mitigate the hazards risks and vulnerabilities in that plan.

State: The Governor's Emergency Operation Directive, The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, amendments to Public Law 93-288, as amended, Title 44, CFR, Federal Emergency Management Agency Regulations, as amended, State Emergency Management Act of 1981, Utah Code 53-2, 63-5, Disaster Response Recovery Act, 63-5A, Executive Order of the Governor, Executive Order 11, Emergency Interim Succession Act, 63-5B.

Local: Local governments play an essential role in implementing effective mitigation. Each local government will review all present or potential damages, losses, and related impacts associated with natural hazards to determine the need or requirement for mitigation action and planning. In the counties and cities making up the SEUALG, the local executive responsible for carrying out plans and policies are the county Commissioners and city or town Mayors. Local governments must be prepared to participate in the post disaster Hazard Mitigation Team process and the pre-mitigation planning as outlined in this document.

Association of Governments: The Association of Governments have been duly constituted under the authority of Title XI, Chapter 13, Utah Code Annotated, 1953, as amended (The Inter-local Cooperation Act); and pursuant to Section 3 of the Executive Order of the Governor of the State of Utah, dated May 27, 1970, with the authority to conduct planning studies and to provide services to its constituent jurisdictions.

D. Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the PDM plan included coordination with local governments to develop a regional planning process meeting each plan component identified in the FEMA Region VIII Crosswalk document, DESHS planning expectation, and local input. And meet the need of reducing risk from natural hazards in Utah, through the implementation of and updating of regional plans.

Local Goals: These goals form the basis for the development of the PDM Plan and are shown from highest priority, at the top of the list, to those of lesser importance nearer the bottom.

- Protection of life before, during, and after the occurrence of a disaster
- Preventing loss of life and reducing the impact of damage where problems cannot be eliminated
- Protection of emergency response capabilities (critical infrastructure)
- Communication and warning systems
- Emergency medical services and medical facilities
- Mobile resources
- Critical facilities
- Government continuity
- Protection of developed property, homes and businesses, industry, education opportunities and the cultural fabric of a community, by combining hazard loss reduction with the community's environmental, social and economic needs
- Protection of natural resources and the environment, when considering mitigation measures
- Promoting public awareness through education of community hazards and mitigation measures
- Preserving and/or restoring natural features that provide mitigation such as floodplains

Long Term Goals:

- Eliminate or reduce the long-term risk to human life and property from identified natural and technologic hazards
- Aid both the private and public sectors in understanding the risks they may be exposed to and finding mitigation strategies to reduce those risks
- Avoid risk of exposure to identified hazards
- Minimize the impacts of those risks when they can not be avoided
- Mitigate the impacts of damage as a result or identified hazards
- Accomplish mitigation strategies in such away that negative environmental impacts are minimized
- Provide a basis for funding of projects outlined as hazard mitigation strategies
- Establish a regional platform to enable the community to take advantage of shared goals, resources, and the availability of outside resources

Objectives: The following objectives are meant to serve as a measure upon which individual hazard mitigation projects can be evaluated. These criteria become especially important when two or more projects are competing for limited resources.

- Identification of persons, agency or organization responsible for implementation
- Projecting a time frame for implementation
- Explanation of how the project will be financed including the conditions for financing and implementing as information is available
- Identifying alternative measures, should financing not be available
- Be consistent with, support, and help implement the goals and objectives or hazard mitigation plans already in place for surrounding counties
- Have significant potential to reduce damages to public and/or private property and/or reduce the cost of, state, and federal recovery for future disasters
- Be the most practical, cost-effective, and environmentally sound alternative after consideration of the options

- Address a repetitive problem, or one that has the potential to have a major impact on an area, reducing the potential for loss of life, loss of essential services and personal
- Property, damage to critical facilities, economic loss, and hardship or human suffering
- Meet applicable permit requirements
- Not encourage development in hazardous areas
- Contribute to both the short and long term solutions to the hazard vulnerability risk problem
- Assuring the benefits of a mitigation measure is equal to or exceeds the cost of implementation
- Have manageable maintenance and modification costs
- When possible, be designed to accomplish multiple objectives including improvement of life-safety risk, damage reduction, restoration of essential services, protection or critical facilities, security or economic development, recovery, and environmental enhancement
- Whenever possible, use existing resources, agencies and programs to implement the project